

country faces great tragedy again and a tremendous national challenge in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

I would like to assure the people of Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama that New Yorkers who lived through 9/11 understand the shock and dismay being felt deeply after Hurricane Katrina.

We are well aware that time and great effort will be needed to rebuild after Hurricane Katrina, but we know also that the recovery will advance strongly because of the great will of the people of Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. I also hope that the recovery will be spurred by the strong support most assuredly coming from countless New Yorkers and Americans from all corners of the country.

I stand ready to work with Members of Congress from Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama to advance all Federal programs necessary for recovery operations after Katrina. My thoughts and prayers are with those affected by Hurricane Katrina and with the people now facing great recovery challenges in its wake.

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I would like to convey my deepest condolences to the victims of Hurricane Katrina, many of whom lost loved ones, their homes and their livelihoods. Many constituents have contacted my office, concerned about relatives, friends, and fellow Americans in that area. A member of my own staff has been touched by this tragedy and has dozens of family members displaced and in distress. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and all those other families who have been affected by this disaster.

While we are devastated by this tragedy, our faith, perseverance and American spirit of generosity will ensure that we help the region and its residents recover and rebuild.

The Pacific Northwest, where my Congressional District is located, is about as far north and west of this tragedy as you can get in the continental U.S. Yet even there, Governor Gregoire is coordinating with state and Federal officials nationwide to get state employees and volunteers on the ground in the affected areas. Our state has readied 600 Washington National Guard soldiers and airmen. We have offered up our State's refueling aircraft, support personnel, helicopters, and satellite communications systems, among other assets. Washington State's residents are giving generously to aid relief efforts and victims. It is likely that we will soon provide a temporary home to thousands of displaced hurricane victims.

I would also like to extend my deepest gratitude to organizations such as the Red Cross for their significant disaster relief efforts. The Red Cross has said that this is their largest relief effort ever—larger than after September 11, 2001, and larger than all four Florida hurricanes last year. We continue hearing heartwarming stories of American Red Cross volunteers from across the Nation, including in my Congressional District, who have already headed down to help with relief efforts.

As we respond to this tragedy, I will continue working with my colleagues to provide needed Federal assistance to the people harmed by this disaster. I know that in months ahead there will be much work to do. As Americans, we have pulled together through tragedies in the past. I am confident that we will demonstrate that same unity and perseverance in overcoming the devastating effects of Hurricane Katrina.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, 10 days ago Hurricane Katrina slammed into America's Gulf Coast. The devastation we have seen is unprecedented. While the Federal Government's response to this devastation has itself been a management catastrophe, I have been heartened by the overwhelming response of our fellow Americans to the victims of Katrina. People have opened their homes and their hearts to their victims. They have donated food, clothing, and money. The goodness of our citizens to one another, especially in their time of need, should make all Americans proud.

With a heavy heart, but with confidence in a better future, I join all my colleagues today in expressing my personal deep sense of sorrow and offering the condolences of a nation to all the victims of Hurricane Katrina. All who have watched these tragic events unfold before us on TV are inspired by, and in awe of, the resilience of the New Orleanians, their courage under adversity, their extraordinary self-sacrifice in mutual assistance, their love of their city, and their determination to rebuild their lives. I pledge my enduring efforts—and I know that my colleagues on the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure join in this pledge—to provide New Orleans and the states of Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama, the resources necessary for the reconstruction efforts.

Today we must remain focused on the recovery from the devastation wrought by Katrina. However, in the coming weeks and months, this Congress must investigate the Government's disastrous response to this disaster. To begin that process, Congresswoman NORTON and I have introduced a bill, H.R. 3659, to reestablish FEMA as an independent agency outside of the control of the bureaucracy of the Department of Homeland Security.

The Government's first priority must be to protect its citizens. It has failed to honor that responsibility, and we must insure that such failure never happens again.

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Pursuant to the order of the House of today, the resolution is considered as read and the previous question is ordered.

The question is on the resolution.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 53 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 1630

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD) at 4 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later today.

FEDERAL JUDICIARY EMERGENCY SPECIAL SESSIONS ACT OF 2005

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3650) to allow United States courts to conduct business during emergency conditions, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3650

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the "Federal Judiciary Emergency Special Sessions Act of 2005".

SEC. 2. EMERGENCY AUTHORITY TO CONDUCT COURT PROCEEDINGS OUTSIDE THE TERRITORIAL JURISDICTION OF THE COURT.

(a) CIRCUIT COURTS.—Section 48 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(e) Each court of appeals may hold special sessions at any place within the United States outside the circuit as the nature of the business may require and upon such notice as the court orders, upon a finding by either the chief judge of the court of appeals (or, if the chief judge is unavailable, the most senior available active judge of the court of appeals) or the judicial council of the circuit that, because of emergency conditions, no location within the circuit is reasonably available where such special sessions could be held. The court may transact any business at a special session outside the circuit which it might transact at a regular session.

"(f) If a court of appeals issues an order exercising its authority under subsection (e), the court—

"(1) through the Administrative Office of the United States Courts, shall—

"(A) send notice of such order, including the reasons for the issuance of such order, to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives; and

"(B) not later than 180 days after the expiration of such court order submit a brief report to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives describing the impact of such order, including—

"(i) the reasons for the issuance of such order;

"(ii) the duration of such order;

"(iii) the impact of such order on litigants; and

"(iv) the costs to the judiciary resulting from such order; and

"(2) shall provide reasonable notice to the United States Marshals Service before the commencement of any special session held pursuant to such order."

(b) DISTRICT COURTS.—Section 141 of title 28, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by inserting "(a)(1)" before "Special";